

L2P 2.0 - LETTERS TO THE NEXT PRESIDENT CRWP FINDING A TOPIC MINI-UNIT

Focus Argument Skills: Finding a Topic & Organizing an Argument

End Product: Open Letter to the President **Text-Type:** Source based argument **Extension:** Video

Overview: When students are faced with the challenge of writing a letter about an issue to an audience they have never met, roadblocks such as what is included in this type of letter, what issue is worth writing about and what should be said might hinder the process from start to finish. The goal of this CRWP mini-unit is to support students as they explore the purpose and format of Letters to the Next President, choose an issue worth writing about, gather information from multiple sources, develop a claim and write a complete argument draft. Students will go through the process of deconstructing models, finding a topic and related sources and defining their argument in writing. The instructional steps listed below can be stretched out across 6 – 12 days depending on class time, depth and student needs.

Resources:

Classroom Resources:

Student Notebook

Models and Lessons:

[CRWP: College Ready Writers Program](#)

[Letters to the Next President 2.0 Website](#)

[Sample letters from Letters to the Next President](#)

Topics and Issues:

L2P Partners:

[kqed Do Now](#)

[NYTimes Opinion Pages](#)

[NYTimes Learning Blog](#)

[NYTimes Room for Debate](#)

[kqed:big issues](#)

[Fusion: Dear Next President](#)

[Youth Radio](#)

Other Sources for Current Events for Students:

[Newsela](#)

[USA Today](#)

[Scholastic News](#)

[Tween Tribune](#)

SEQUENCE OF INSTRUCTION:

FRONTLOADING (1 - 3 class periods)

1. Introduce idea of L2P
2. Preview and analyze models
3. Finding and choosing a topic

FINDING SOURCES & GATHERING INFORMATION (2 - 5 class periods)

4. Gather texts/sources
5. Reading for information
6. Making a claim

DRAFTING (1 - 2 periods)

7. Organizing the argument
8. Adding sources to support the claim

REVISION (1 period)

9. Adding an anecdote

EDITING & PUBLISH (1 period)

10. Reviewing letter elements
11. Publish for an audience

PRINCIPLES: The Sequence of Instruction provides an overview of the mini-unit with specific teaching steps and lesson listed below in Instructional Steps. These instructional steps are grounded in the writing instruction principles of using models and mentor texts and providing and teaching choice to student writers. The focus on source-based argument writing connects to the work of the College Ready Writers Program.

PLANNING NOTE: Depending on the amount of class time used each day and the amount of scaffolding or pre-teaching needed, this unit can be completed in 6 traditional class periods or stretched to 12. The timing of each section is simply to help in planning.

INSTRUCTIONAL STEPS:

FRONTLOADING

Introduction of L2P:

1. Students and teachers begin a unit page for L2P in a notebook or writing space. Students will use this space throughout the unit to collect ideas and thinking about their argument letter.
2. Notebook Writing: Teachers provide classroom prompts to help students begin thinking about L2P.
Possible Prompts:
 - A. Ask students to begin thinking about where in their world they wish to see change. Maybe this change is in their personal life, maybe in their school, maybe in the nation and maybe in the world. Invite them to write about what they wish the change would be and what they would hope would be different after the change.

OR

 - B. Writing letters to presidents has a long history – before snapchat and twitter – but even now, people write letters to the President. Teachers preview some examples of actual letters written to President Obama with the students. As the class looks at the resources, students jot notes in the notebook about what topics appear and the possible purpose of the letters.
Letters to President Obama: [tumblr: Letters to President Obama](#) [Letter to Obama: Woman on US currency](#)

After previewing the letters as a class or individually, ask students to write in response to questions such as:

Why do people write letters to the President of the U.S.?

What topics do people write about?

What is the purpose of writing letters?

What do they hope happens as a result of their letters?

What kinds of things would you want to say in a letter to a future President?

3. After discussing the letters and student responses, teachers introduce [L2P 2.0: Letters to the Next President](#)

In this unit, frontloading acts as an entrance for student writers to the idea and rationale for writing a letter to the next President. Time spent on frontloading early in the unit through understanding the purpose, looking at models and generating ideas, will clarify and simplify work later in the unit.

Previewing and Analyzing Models

In this section of the mini-unit, teachers and students will use the [Commission on Writing's publication](#) from the first version of L2P, to preview and analyze student models to determine how they are written in terms of content, organization and structure.

1. Choose one letter to analyze together. Read through the letter once and note at the top the general topic and specific stance/claim if one is made. Next analyze the way the letter is built – what does the writer do to make the argument? How is the letter organized? This analysis can be in the form of a list or as an annotated description on the side of the letter. See these [sample annotated letters](#) as models.
2. Students then work individually or in pairs to annotate one more letter.
3. Students share what they noticed about the letters in terms of content, organization and structure. As the class shares, create a list of possible topics as well as patterns in content, structure and organization. This topic list and patterns will become possible topics and organizational structures for students later in the mini-unit.
4. End the lesson with a reflective writing:
What seems to make an effective letter? What seems like it has to be there and what are possibilities? What would you include if you were writing one?

Resource: [Commission on Writing L2P](#)

Possible model texts:

Heed My Warning: Invasion of Alien (Exotic) Species by Stephanie W., Taipei City, Taiwan

How Can We Help Education in the USA? by Casey W., Boone Grove, Ind.

We Cannot Do It Without You by Sarah W., Cupertino, Calif.

African Massacre by Claire T., Dubuque, Iowa

Run Forest, Run! by Sirjaut K., Hartland, Wis.

Poverty Is Everyone's Problem by Natalie, Shelburne, Vt.

Before writing a letter to the next president, it makes sense for writers to look at what others did in the first version of L2P. Using model texts at the beginning of a unit provides students with a vision of what they will write and offers possibilities in topic and structure.

Finding and Choosing a Topic

In this section of the mini-unit, teachers will guide students through writing that leads to a topic for their Letter to the Next President. These are three easily accessible strategies for supporting topic choice. Teachers may choose to offer all or some of these strategies. The number of idea generating strategies depends on the amount of work writers have already done throughout the year to collect ideas and issues about which they care.

Strategies for Finding a Topic:

A.Headline Search

This strategy uses the conversations and current topics in the world as a way to brainstorm possible topics. Teachers allow

students to look through local, state or national newspapers, magazines or digital collections of current topics, creating a list of possible issues along the way. Depending on the students' experience, the teacher may want to model how to look at a digital resource and collect ideas in a notebook.

After looking, students will have a beginning list of possible topics. Ask each student to share one idea with the class to start a class list of possible topics. This class list can be used when a student needs to change topics later or if a student is having a hard time finding a topic of their own.

Digital Sources for a Headline Search:

[kqed Do Now](#)

[NYTimes Opinion Pages](#)

[NYTimes Learning Blog](#)

[NYTimes Room for Debate](#)

[kqed:big issues](#)

[Fusion: Dear Next President](#)

[Youth Radio](#)

Now that students have a vision for what they will be writing, they are ready to think about an issue they want as a focus. Because this mini-unit focuses on addressing an issue as part of the letter, students will be asked to gather sources, research and use sources as a foundation for their letter. With that much work ahead, having a student-chosen topic can provide motivation.

Finding and choosing a topic is an authentic part of writing - a habit and skill of being a writer. Like any other part of the process, finding a topic can be taught and supported in the classroom; however, it is a step that is often skipped or simply assigned. When a teacher offers topic choice by simply telling students to choose whatever topic they want without showing students how, students are frequently left with only a few choices on the surface of their thinking. When teachers assign a specific topic, students may be able to complete the assignment, but they may write without passion or motivation for revision. Although a student writer may well be able to quickly name a topic or even write to a prompt a teacher assigns, helping students find a topic worth writing about, a topic they invest in, and a topic worth their audience and purpose will set the conditions for the work of argument. This skill is practiced in the structures of the CRWP [Routine Argument Writing](#) and developed again in the [Extended Researched Argument](#).

B. Writer's Notebook or Quicklist

This strategy leverages the work a student writer has done previously in a notebook. Often, a student's writer's notebook already contains many ideas for L2P.

1. Invite students to survey their notebooks, looking for patterns of topics they care about. For example, a student might write about school testing on a writing topic list and then again on a quickwrite when she talks about her weekend and then again on a list of things she want to change in her life. This repetition brings up the possible topic of testing in schools and the stress teenagers feel as a result. If needed, the teacher can model the way to find patterns in his own notebook.
2. If students do not have a notebook with ideas, one way to get to a list of possible topics is to use the [Quicklist](#) strategy from Gretchen Bernabei. In this strategy, students number their a page from 1 – 10 and teachers guide them to list a series of ideas that lead toward possible issues for a letter to the next president. For example, a teacher might say:
1 – 2: List two issues that are important to you or affect you personally
3 - 4: List two issues that are important in or affect your community
5 – 6: List two issues that are important to the nation
7 – 8: List two things we should stop from happening in this world
9 - 10: List two things we should start doing in the world
3. After listing possible topics, once again share ideas with peers and then the class as a whole. This collaborating and sharing topics helps to build the class list of possible topics.

C. Letters to the Next President Samples

Earlier in the mini-unit, students and teachers looked at sample letters to analyze the way the letters were built. As a class, return to the letters, gather topic ideas from the model texts, and add to the class list. Students can choose, or be inspired by, any of these topics to add to their own lists of topics in their notebook.

[Student Sample: Topic List](#)

Choosing a Topic:

After working through strategies to find a topic, both the students and the class have a list of possible issues for their L2P letter and students are ready to choose a topic.

1. To support the students as they choose an appropriate topic for their letter, teachers can lead the class in creating guiding questions for choosing a quality topic. These questions should help students choose a topic appropriate to the audience and purpose of this letter, which is important to them and others, and that can be researched and developed with source material.

Sample guiding questions to choose a topic:

Why does this issue matter to you?

Why does this topic matter to a larger population?

How does your personal experience connect to the nation?

Who else does this issue matter to?

Who is affected by the issue?

What are the causes and effects of this issue?

What can be done in response to this issue?

What are the different perspectives on this issue? Does everyone believe the same thing?

What can a President or the government do about the issue?

2. With a large list, teachers can model using the questions to narrow the longer list to a short list of three to five possible topics.

3. As a final step, ask students to write about each of the topics on their short list using the guiding questions as a guide. Although this writing does not have to be long, it allows students to see which topic has the most interest for them, which topic they feel has the most possibility, and which topic they want to spend more time developing. Wrap up the writing with students naming the topic they are choosing and explaining why they are choosing it.

Formative Assessment / Conference Opportunity:

This moment is a good checkpoint to be sure students are on track. Teachers can conference with individual students, collect a notecard from all students to check topics or have all students share their idea to support students in choosing an issue that is worth writing about and can lead to a letter supported by source material.

II. FINDING SOURCES & GATHERING INFORMATION

Finding Sources by Asking Researchable Questions:

For most students and teachers, the role of source material in an argument is to provide the “evidence” to support a claim. However, source material does more. Before writing, student writers read source material to define and understand an issue - the key concepts, the people involved, the causes, effects and the multiple perspectives. Reading sources then leads the writer toward reasons and a refined claim. Finally, in writing or speaking, the sources act as support evidence in an argument.

Like finding a topic, gathering sources is a skill that is often assigned rather than taught. In an age of easy information, students simply google their topic and are flooded with source material. Teaching students to gather sources includes helping them identify a focus, asking researchable questions, and choosing valid and appropriate source material. In this section of the mini-unit, students will begin to learn the skill of gathering sources to understand the current state of their issue and develop a claim with reasons. Like other sections, the amount of time spent on scaffolding searching depends on the students’ needs.

Although simply typing in an issue will result in any number of related sources, for this mini-unit, teachers can guide students toward focused source material by asking researchable question.

1. Returning to the questions students asked when choosing a topic along with other questions needed for building knowledge on the issue, teachers demonstrate how to create a focused google search question. For example, if a student chooses the issue of school testing, rather than simply googling “testing” show students how to ask a specific question such as “How much has school testing grown over ten years?”

Teachers can model asking researchable questions by brainstorming specific questions to be answered on the chosen topic or by taking the general questions from earlier in the unit and making them more specific: What are the different perspectives on this issue? Does everyone believe the same thing? What are the pros and cons of school testing?

General Topic/Questions	Researchable Questions
<p>School Testing</p> <p>Why does this issue matter to you?</p> <p>Why does this topic matter to a larger population?</p> <p>How does your personal experience connect to the nation?</p> <p>Who else does this issue matter to?</p> <p>Who is affected by the issue?</p> <p>What are the causes and effects of this issue?</p> <p>What can be done in response to this issue?</p> <p>What are the different perspectives on this issue?</p> <p>Does everyone believe the same thing?</p> <p>What can a President or the government do about the issue?</p>	<p>How much has school testing grown in the past ten years?</p> <p>Who chooses what tests students take?</p> <p>What are the effects of school testing on students?</p> <p>What are the pros and cons of school testing?</p>

For more thinking about teaching a researchable question listen to this [NCTE podcast](#) with middle school teacher, Lindsay Isaacs.

- Using the researchable questions, students gather sources that will provide information to explain their chosen issue, reveal its importance, causes or effects and support their claim.

Notes:

- Finding at least three sources that provide information on the issue and the reason it matters will be useful for this letter.
- Reminding students that source material can come in many ways (articles, videos, infographics, cartoons, speeches, charts ...) can open the possibilities for source material
- The same list of digital resources used earlier to find a topic are often great resources for gathering information.
- For additional resources on researching see L2P partner kqed: [kqed: research tips](#)

Gathering Information

After finding sources, students are ready to read their collected sources to gather information about their chosen issue. The note-catcher in this section of the mini-unit focuses on four main areas of understanding a student would want to know in order to develop a claim and argument.

1. Teachers provide students with a note-catcher that provides spaces for them to collect information as they read. This note-catcher can be built by the students with their individual researchable questions that guide their reading and research or as a class you can build one that captures the big ideas needed to understand and explain any issue. The note-catcher included in this mini-unit is an example of a general note-catcher that can work for almost any issue.

2. Students read sources and complete the note-catcher. Teachers remind students to code their note taking in a way that identifies the source material so they can cite it when writing later in the unit.

It is more than likely that any issue a student chooses will be broad and important on many levels. Gathering and choosing information from a set of sources is a skill that needs teaching and practice. One way teachers can support students as they sift through sources for the kinds of information they need to understand their issue and make a claim is to help students focus. Providing students with reading strategies, modeling, or a tool for reading such as an evidence note-catcher will help students gather their thinking.

Four-square note-catcher:

Topic/Issue: _____	
Facts: What are the facts and background of the issue?	Causes: What are the causes of the issues? What can be done?
Effect: What are the effects of the issue? Who is affected? And in what way? What can be done about the effects?	Perspectives, Sides, Examples: What are the different perspectives and experiences of this issue?
Questions I still need answered: _____	
Possible Claim: _____	

For more detailed lessons on gathering and choosing evidence see the CRWP [ranking evidence](#) mini-unit

Making a Claim:

After gathering source information, students are ready to make a claim they can use in their letter.

1. Using a shared class topic and the source information, teachers model for students the process of going from the first gut claim written earlier during topic choosing to a refined and specific claim based on source material.

For Example:

GUT: Testing is bad for students.

REFINED: With the rise in school testing over the last ten years, stress levels of students has also risen so one issue worth considering in the next four years is reducing the amount of testing students do in schools.

2. Students might write one or more claims and share with peers to determine which claim states most clearly their position.

Formative Assessment / Conference Opportunity:

This moment is a good checkpoint to be sure students are on track. Teachers can conference with individual students, collect a notecard from all students to check on claims or have all students share their claim with the class. This check allows teachers to support students in moving forward with a claim that can be supported by the source material.

III. DRAFTING

During drafting, writers make a number of decisions and moves to take ideas to words for an audience. In one mini-unit, it is impossible to teach everything a writer might need. In this mini-unit, drafting lessons focus on organizing an idea and adding sources.

Mapping Out an Organization

In this section of the mini-unit, teachers support students as they map out the organization of their letter using the note-catcher or the models from earlier in the mini-unit.

1. Teachers introduce one or both of the strategies to find an organization. Showing both strategies simply opens more possibilities for students to choose the organization that makes sense for their letter.

2. As a class or individually, students work through the mapping strategies to create a list of possible outlines for their letter. The teacher may suggest that the students create three possible outlines in their notebook so they can practice the writer's skill of choosing the best organizational structure.

With a claim and supporting sources, students might have enough information to simply start writing their letter. However, when using sources and creating an argument letter to the next president, it is often helpful to support students in mapping out an organization. Like choosing a topic, this is a writing skill that is often assigned by telling students to organize with an introduction, body and conclusion or by handing students a pre-made outline that asks students to fit their ideas into someone else's structure. However, students have already done work during this unit that naturally helps students map out possible organizations. With a list of possible outlines, students create an organized but individual letter by choosing the best structure for their topic.

Strategies for Creating Possible Organizations:

A. Organizing with The Note-catcher:

If students used the four-square note-catcher, they already have a built in organizational structure. Because each box already focuses on a topic and contains source information, each box can become a body paragraph. For example, a student might use the boxes to map out this structure:

- I. Introduction (with claim)
- II. Background on the Issue

- III. Causes of the issue
- IV. Effects: who and how
- V. Varying Perspectives
- VI. What can be done
- VII. Conclusion

B. Organizing with The Models:

Earlier in the unit, students analyzed model letters. Returning to these models, teachers and students review the organizational structure of the models as possible outlines for their own letters. Using the earlier analysis, the class can create multiple possible outlines based on the order and structure of the sample letters. For example, a sample outline for the essay "Run Forest, Run" might be:

- I. Introduction to problem & context
- II. Examples - personal and specific
- III. Explain issue
- IV. Causes
- V. Call to Action

- C. Students share at least one of the possible outlines they created to create a shared class list of possible structures.
- D. After gathering possible organizations, the teacher talks through how to choose an organization that makes sense. This talking helps students see how to think about the best organization for their topic. Teachers also model how to expand the outline to include source material.

This shared list provides more possibilities for students just learning this skill as well as possible structures teachers can use when conferencing with students who are having trouble organizing. The shared list also lets students recognize that there are multiple ways to organize a letter.

For example, with the testing topic an outline may begin to take shape this way:

- I. Introduction
 - Claim: With the rise in school testing over the last ten years, stress levels of students has also risen so one issue worth considering in the next four years is reducing the amount of testing students do in schools.
- II. Background on the Issue

- Current tests: State, SAT, ACT,
- Testing in schools: 25 hours each year (Washington Post)

E. Using the possible organizations, students map their letter creating an outline with headings and source material in bullets to use as they draft.

Formative Assessment / Conference Opportunity:

This moment is a good checkpoint to be sure students are on track. Teachers can conference with individual students or collect possible outlines from all students. This check allows teachers to support students in moving forward with an organization that makes sense for their claim and evidence.

For lessons on the practice of choosing an organization for thinking see the [CRWP Making Informal Arguments Mini-Unit](#).

For more detailed lessons on choosing and organizing evidence see the [CRWP Ranking Evidence Mini-Unit](#).

Adding Sources

With a draft started and a list of source material to use, students often need help adding and developing these sources. In this section of the mini-unit, teachers can use one or more of the three strategies below to help students use the information they gathered from their source material.

As students write their draft, teachers can support their writing in many ways, showing them how to create introductions, order their reasons, or add transitions. One specific area of teaching needed for an argument letter using source material is how to add and develop source material in support of a claim.

Incorporating source material is often a gap in student writing. Sometimes, students have chosen the exact right evidence to support a reason or a claim, but that source material is simply dropped in, without reference to the source, without an explanation, and sometimes without the reader even knowing where the writer's words end and the source's words begin. The amount of teaching around using and developing sources depends on the learning and experience of the students.

Strategies for adding and developing sources

A. Sentence Frames:

Because student writers are in the process of learning how to use academic language in writing, they sometimes just need a way to get started with their words. One way to support students in adding and using source material is by giving them the words to get started. These words are often called sentence frames or sentence starters because they provide a way for students to get an idea started.

1. As a class, brainstorm a list of words people use when referring to or using source material. (Although generating ideas as a class allows students to participate in the generating process, teachers may also provide a list of frames that are commonly used.)

2. Teachers model using a sentence frame to introduce and use source material in a draft with the shared class topic or a student model.

3. Students return to their draft and add sentence frames in places where they will help the reader understand the source material or continues writing using sentence frames when using source material.

Sample Sentence Frames to get started:

To introduce a quote or reference from a source:

The article _____ explains, “...”
_____(name)____, ____ (title)____, argues, “...”
According to _____,

To provide explanation:

For example,
_____ is evidenced by _____
_____ is seen in the article _____ by _____

To connect source to the claim:

_____ matters because _____
As a result of _____ is _____
As _____ reveals, _____
_____ shows that _____

Sentence frames are particularly helpful for students who are new to academic writing, struggle with connecting ideas and ELL students learning the vocabulary of argument writing.

B. Say - Mean – Matter:

Say-Mean –Matter moves the focus of adding source material from the words needed to frame the source to the connection between the source and the claim.

1. Teachers model the strategy by filling in the chart with their own source information – writing exactly what the source says, what it means, and why it matters.

2. Students do the same with a blank chart created in their notebook or on a separate page using the evidence they gathered.

3. Teachers can model how the chart not only helps them develop the source material, but it also helps a writer make decisions about what evidence to use and how to connect that evidence to the claim with their own thinking.

4. Students use the information in the chart to add directly to the essay draft.

[Kelly Gallagher](#) introduced this tool to support students in discussing literature, helping them understand what a piece of literature said, what it meant and why it mattered. This same tool can help students connect a source to a reason or claim as it asks student writers to think about what the source actually says (direct quote), then what it means (students words - summary or take away) and finally why it matters (connection to the claim.)

Sample:

SAY (What the source actually says)	MEAN (Restatement of what the source means/ the take-away)	MATTER (Why this fact/source connects to and matters to the reason or claim)
Citing a recent study about testing, Strauss says, “The average student in America’s big-city public schools takes some 112 mandatory standardized tests between pre-kindergarten and the end of 12th grade — an average of about eight a year,... That eats up between 20 and 25 hours every school year” “Confirmed: Standardized Testing Has Taken over Our Schools. But Who Is to Blame?” <i>Washington Post</i> Valerie Strauss	This means that a large portion of the school year is spent on prepping for and taking tests at every grade level.	This matters because the instructional time is lost for students, not only on taking the actual tests but also on preparing for and worrying about the tests. With this much time lost, learning is also lost. This loss of instructional time is one reason to reduce the amount of testing in schools.

C. CRWP: Joseph Harris

In this strategy, students and teachers learn about moves writers make with academic writing as defined and explained by Joseph Harris in *Rewriting: How to do Things With Texts*. Harris's *Rewriting* is the focus of the way students adding and using source material in the College-Ready Writers Program. The CRWP has adopted Harris's understanding of academic writing as a conversation, especially his focus on using "other people's words." Harris names and defines the moves writers make with texts under the categories "forwarding" and "countering."

Formative Assessment / Conference Opportunity:

This moment is a good checkpoint to be sure students are on track. Students can highlight their draft, marking in different colors where they have introduced and named a source, quoted a source, and explained how the source connects to the issue. Teachers can then conference with individual students or collect the drafts and quickly look for this specific skill.

For more detailed lessons on teaching the use of source material in argument through the work of Joseph Harris (*Rewriting: How To Do Things with Text*), see the [CRWP website](#).

REVISION

At this point in writing, students will have a complete draft letter with a claim, an organized structure, source material, and a topic they care about. There are any number of revisions a teacher could guide students in making - developing source material to a greater length, providing transitions to connect ideas, deleting evidence that doesn't support the claim, creating an engaging introduction, adding a strong last line. It is likely that the needed revisions will vary from writer to writer and the teacher can guide students in the direction that will make the letter more effective. In this mini-unit, the revision is focused on one specific addition - adding an anecdote and a more general invitation to revise using the model texts from the beginning of the unit.

Specific Revision: Adding an anecdote

Looking back at the models, readers can notice that many of the samples include a personal story or anecdote from a source that provides voice and craft to the letter. This revision step opens the possibility of adding a short narrative to the letter for impact.

1. Teachers and students return to the sample letters from the beginning of the mini-unit and look specifically at “Run Forest, Run!” and “We Cannot Do It Without You.” Both of these letters add a personal story to their letter.
2. Teachers ask students to notice the highlighted portions of the letter, discussing the purpose of the highlighted portions and why a writer would include this in a letter like this.
3. After discussing, students brainstorm a list of possible small narratives or anecdotes that could be included in their letter. These small stories may come from their own life, the source material or even a fictionalized account of information from the source. If needed, the teacher can model doing this with the shared class topic.
4. After brainstorming possibilities, students write one or more possible anecdotes to add to their letter and decide if the anecdote adds to the letter.

General Revision: Using the Sample Letters

Another way teachers can guide revision is to return to the sample letters and the notes students first made.

1. Teachers ask students to re-read the sample letters and notice what the writers did:
 - * that seemed effective or interesting
 - * that students might try in their own letter
 - * that is missing from their letterThese noticings can be anything from how the letter opens to how it ends or how it uses source material to how it crafts the writing.
2. Students share their findings with the class to create a list of possible revisions.
3. Invite students to look back at the models and find an interesting or effective move the writer makes that they could try.

EDITING & PUBLISHING

1.A final step in writing is acknowledging that this letter will be going public. People across the nation, and maybe even the President of the United States will be reading these letters. Knowing this, teachers can use the tools and strategies that they have found successful to help students edit their papers carefully.

2.Publish to the [L2P website](#)

EXTENSION:

As an extension or variation, students can take their letter and create a video letter. See this [extension lesson](#) for details.